

# Innovations for Exceptionally Low-Cost Monoclonal Antibody (mAb) Manufacturing

## Grand Challenges (In Honor of Dr. Steve Hadley)

### Rules & Guidelines

Applications for Option A due no later than Jan 31, 2025, 11:30 a.m. U.S. Pacific Time  
Applications for Option B due no later than May 31, 2025, 11:30 a.m. U.S. Pacific Time

#### Supporting Materials

- 1) Full RFP – [Innovations for Low-cost Monoclonal Antibody \(mAb\) Manufacturing](#)
- 2) [Application Instructions](#)
- 3) [Budget Template and Narrative](#)
- 4) [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#)

#### Key Dates and Deadlines\*

Key Dates	Event
November 18, 2024	Application period opens
January 31, 2025, <b>11:30 a.m. US PT</b>	Option A application period closes, deadline to submit
By early April 2025	Option A Proposal review completed
May 31, 2025, 11:30 AM US PT	Option B application period closes, deadline to submit
July 2025	Option A Estimated start dates

\*Any changes to the Key Dates and Deadlines will be updated on the [Grand Challenges website](#).

#### Eligibility Criteria

This initiative is open to nonprofit organizations, for-profit companies, international organizations, government agencies and academic institutions. We particularly encourage applications involving projects led by women / in collaboration with women-led organizations, and/or applications from / in collaboration with institutions based in low- and middle-income countries. Only individuals who are applying through a legally recognized corporate entity are eligible.

Upon registration, applicants must provide information about the tax status of their organization as different terms and conditions may apply under the applicable tax laws. You should confirm your organization's tax status with the appropriate advisor or entity within your organization such as your grants or contracts department, finance, or office of sponsored research. Either funder may request additional information regarding your tax status. For information about tax statuses, you may check with your own advisors and review information on the applicable tax requirements.

#### How to Apply

Please review the [Application Instructions](#) as you develop your proposal.

Changes to the [Rules and Guidelines](#) and to the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) document will be posted periodically, including any changes to the dates listed above. Please read the FAQ document before submitting any questions or concerns.

**Proposals must be submitted prior to the deadlines of January 31, 2025, 11:30 a.m. U.S. Pacific Time (Option A) and May 31, 2025, 11:30 a.m. U.S. Pacific Time (Option B)**

### **Awards**

**Option A:** The Gates Foundation and LifeArc will consider several proposals for awards of up to \$750,000 USD for each project, with a grant term of up to 18 months. Each organization will make coordinated but independent award decisions. Application budgets should be commensurate with the scope of work proposed.

**Option B:** Potential funding and grant terms will be evaluated on a per-project basis. The funding and timeline are intentionally open given that the work is exploratory at this time. Application budgets should be commensurate with the scope of work being proposed.

### **Review Process – Option A**

The Grand Challenges application review process for this RFP will be executed in five steps:

1. The first step consists of screening applications to evaluate whether proposals address the key needs described in the topic. We screen for responses that are completely unrelated or specifically excluded in the topic description. Excluded responses encompass ideas related to the topic but that, for strategic reasons, we are not funding under the Grand Challenges initiative. In addition, we exclude proposals that are considered incremental advances, appropriate responses that are similar to work in which the foundation or other Grand Challenges programs are already investing, or avenues of inquiry we deem ill-suited to the Grand Challenges initiative. Applicants with proposals removed from consideration during the screening process will be notified that their proposals were declined but will not receive specific feedback.
2. In the second step, reviews are chaired or co-chaired by technical leads from the Gates Foundation and LifeArc and are conducted by reviewers both internal and external to both organizations. Reviewers are selected from the world's leading researchers and comprise both experts in the topic area and experts in complementary areas. Not all reviewers have deep expertise in the topic; please consider this information when drafting your proposal.

The evaluation criteria for both the Foundation and LifeArc are:

- Potential to lead to solutions with substantial impact related to the specific topic
- Innovation, Technical excellence & feasibility, including:
  - creativity of the project's approach and clear differentiation from existing approaches
  - a clear and rigorous conceptual framework for the activities
- A clear, realistic Project Plan, including:
  - investigator and organization capabilities and potential for collaboration
  - value in terms of appropriateness of the budget and timeline relative to project complexity, risk, and potential impact
  - A projected downstream development and IP management plan that seeks to maximise global health impact and if relevant may support regionalised LMIC mAb manufacture.

3. The third step is the validation and shortlisting of proposals to move on to the next stage in the process. Shortlisted proposal applicants may be invited to submit additional information and/or invited to an interview.
4. The fourth step is the final selection of the proposals to be funded by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee may recommend the proposal be funded, subject to specific modifications which will be negotiated as part of the award process. Finalist organizations will be invited to fill out either Gates Foundation or LifeArc official proposal templates and additional instructions will be provided at that time.
5. The fifth and final step is a due diligence review by the appropriate funding organization and to directly discuss and negotiate any adjustments to the proposed project recommended by the Executive Committee. Investigators will be contacted as part of the due diligence review.

### **Review Process – Option B**

Applications submitted to Option B will be reviewed monthly by technical experts internal to the Gates Foundation and we will respond to applicants within 2 months of submitting their proposal with either an email to decline the proposal or request for further engagement.

#### *Management of Conflict of Interest*

To identify and avoid conflicts of interest among application reviewers, such reviewers will not review proposals from organizations with which the reviewer has self-identified conflict of interest. The Gates Foundation and LifeArc are committed to recognizing, recording and managing any conflicts of interest arising in connection with this challenge and this includes any conflicts of interest affecting Gates Foundation and LifeArc staff, reviewers or members of the Executive Committee.

### **Eligibility and Notifications**

Please review the [Gates Foundation's sample terms and conditions](#). Please note that depending on the tax status of your organization, alternate terms and conditions may apply. Please also review the [Gates Foundation's standard Request for Proposal \(RFP\) Terms and Conditions](#).

Details regarding LifeArc's funding terms and conditions will be shared at a later date. LifeArc seeks to take a flexible and proportional approach tailored to the technology stage and type of awardee with the goal of incentivizing innovation towards public health impact and equitable access.

### **Privacy Notice and Terms of Use**

When submitting materials to the Foundation please keep in mind that because we have a focus on achieving charitable outcomes, we view information that we obtain through our grantmaking as a public good. Subject to the [Gates Foundation's Privacy & Cookies Notice](#), the Foundation may also share information you provide to us (either orally or in writing) with third parties, including external reviewers, consultants, contingent workers, key partners and co-funders. Submissions to this RFP will be shared with LifeArc (subject to [LifeArc's privacy policy and its obligations under applicable data privacy laws and regulations](#).) and may be shared with additional third parties. **You should assume that nothing will be kept confidential and**

**should not include any information in the proposal, budget, supplemental materials, or reports that you consider proprietary.**

Additionally, the foundation is required by the IRS to publish a list of its grants. The foundation also provides general descriptions of its grants on its web sites, in press releases, and in other marketing materials.

For more information, please review the [Grand Challenges Privacy and Terms of Use](#).

### **Representation**

By providing any Submission Materials, you represent to the Gates Foundation and LifeArc that (i) you have the right to provide any personal information submitted; (ii) you are a duly authorized representative of the Applicant and agree to be bound by the terms set forth above, without amendment and (iii) none of the information in your Submission Materials is confidential or proprietary.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

Answers to many application questions can be found on the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document.

### **Inquiries**

Please direct all questions about this initiative, selection criteria or application instructions by e-mail to the following address: [grandchallenges@gatesfoundation.org](mailto:grandchallenges@gatesfoundation.org).